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presses the hope that "if some unwarranted legal proceedings does not clip the wings of the *Bee*, it will likewise soon be flying all over Germany."

The remaining references to German literature in these magazines are even more scattering and disconnected than the ones considered above. We read, for instance, in the *Republic of Letters* for June, 1728, that Benjamin Neukirch, the Ansbach court poet, had translated Fenelon's *Telemachus* into High-German verse. The *Works of the Learned* for October, 1742, prints an article from Derfurt (*sic*) recounting the melancholy circumstances attendant upon the death of Madame Sidonie Hedwig Zäunemann, a poetess of the Gottsched school, who was drowned at Ilmenau while crossing the Ilm swollen with rains. Considerable space is devoted to her life and character and much is made of the fact that in 1739 the university of Göttingen invested her with the poetess' crown, upon which occasion "the laurel was placed on her head by Count Reuss, who insisted on performing this part of the ceremony." The *Literary Journal* of Dublin for September, 1746, notes the publication in Frankfurt of the poetical works of Mrs. Rieger, "a lady much celebrated by the Connaisseurs in that science." From the preface of this edition is extracted a list of some twenty living muses of Germany, for the most part, imitators and emulators of Gottsched and his wife. Mrs. Gottsched in particular is mentioned as a poetess "to whom are paid the highest compliments."

However slight in value my gleanings in this sterile field may be, they at least prove conclusively that any untimely effort to arouse a premature and unnatural interest in German literature was bound to fail. At this time literary currents were flowing in the opposite direction. The influence was English-German and not German-English. Germany could not expect to play a prominent rôle in European literature until it had passed through the period of mere imitation and created something which was at once both distinctively German and a "document humain." The accomplishment of this task was reserved for the all-embracing and universal genius of Goethe, whose *Werther*, translated in 1779, opened the flood-gates and released a stream of translation which fertilized England's barren literary soil during half a century.

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JOHN DONNE'S VERSE.

The Rhetoric of John Donne's Verse. By WIGHTMAN FLETCHER MELTON. Johns Hopkins University Dissertation. Baltimore: J. H. Furst Co., 1906.

In his scholarly study of Donne's poetic theory Dr. Melton has made a rare and substantial contribution to the science of English verse. In marked contrast with prose criticism and rhetoric, this field of investigation has received scant tillage at least in this country. Of course we are not unmindful of the splendid researches of such pioneers as Lanier, Price, Child, Corson, and Bright, but their names can be exhausted on one's two hands. Such recent explorations into this unmapped realm as have been undertaken by Professors Alden, Gummere, Brumbaugh, Belden, Brown, Miller, and others, are of peculiar interest and value, and have put all students of English poetics richly in their debt.

Dr. Melton has had the hardihood to attack the very citadel of the enemy. Those who are at all familiar with Donne's poetical writings can appreciate the baffling nature of the problem which he has undertaken to solve, for Donne's peculiar metrical system has always been a puzzle to his readers. Even his enthusiastic admirer, Ben Jonson, who esteemed him "the first poet in the world in some things," declared impatiently that "Donne deserved hanging for not keeping of accent." Hazlitt spoke of his verses as "riddles that the sphinx could not unravel," and Pope even assumed the duty of "translating" Donne's satires into "modern verse." Mr. Edmund Gosse concluded that "he intentionally essayed to introduce a revolution in English versification." A score of critics, weary with guessing at the secret of his art, have finally consigned him to a limbo of beautiful but paradoxical originality. Coleridge alone was enabled through his instinctive taste and critical infallibility to attain to a fuller appreciation of Donne's wonderful technique, yet he saw but darkly through the veil of the mystery.

More recent students, such as Professors Norton, Craik, Saintsbury, and Wendell, while acknowledging Donne's marvellous gift of terse expression, the vigor of his imagination, the sweetness of his sentiment, his subtle wit, and majestic learning, have nevertheless felt constrained, with

tender reluctance, to convict Donne of the poetical sins of ruggedness, obscurity, and uncouthness, of fantastical conceits and studied pedantry. They seem, indeed, to have been forced into the dilemma of admitting either that he had no correct ear or was perversely regardless of harmony.

It was while engaged, as a Fellow of Johns Hopkins University in the task of applying to Donne the theory of secondary word-accent, first advanced and fully formulated by Professor Bright, that Dr. Melton discovered the closely hidden secrets of his verse. "The revelation," he says, "came to me suddenly after three years of daily, almost hourly, entreating, caressing, and wheedling of each line of his poetry." He proceeded to test his subject by Professor Bright's "doctrines," or three ways in which poetry can be read. Having eliminated the "sense-doctrine," which disregards rhythm for sense, and the "ictus-doctrine," which ignores sense for rhythm, he found that the third, the "pitch or rhythm-doctrine," furnished the desired clew. Observing that "duration is substituted for pitch as the characteristic element in the rhythmic quality of secondary-accent syllables when under the ictus," the author found that "the word in thesis receives a word-accent that is subordinated to the ictus," and so preserves and enriches the rhythm. This prevents the flow of the sentence or the pattern of the verse from obscuring the meaning. Scarcely audible articles and prepositions, unaccented and derivative syllables are thus sometimes stressed to meet the exigencies of both meaning and rhythm.

In the first problem attacked by Dr. Melton, he was completely successful in explaining the emphasis elicited by verse-stress in Donne, when it is at variance with the usual or prose emphasis. He thus found in the poet a final and clinching argument for the Bright theory. Pursuing his labyrinth still further, he was led to an examination of a practically untouched aspect of English versification, viz., the appearance of the same word now in arsis and now in thesis as an additional factor in the music of the line. This arsis-thesis variation of sounds in the same line or in close proximity, proved to be the long-sought key to Donne's verse-riddle. The following couplet affords an illustration :

"She, she is dead ; she's dead ; when thou know'st this
Thou know'st how wan a ghost this our world is."

The mystery was gone, the puzzle was solved ; this was the hidden characteristic of the old poet's verse which had been so long regarded as inexplicable.

So far then from being careless in versifying, Donne, we now know went beyond all other poets in the care with which he wove the intricate meshes of his poetic web. He rimed not merely at the end or in the middle of the lines, but everywhere, and exhausted all the possibilities of assonance, alliteration, and antithesis. His rule of composition is thus formulated by the author :

"When a word, syllable, or sound, appears in arsis, get it into thesis as quickly as possible, and *vice versa* ; having twisted, pressed, and screwed (Coleridge uses all three of these words in his quatrain) all the meaning out of that word, take up another and carry it through the same process. Better still, instead of pressing one word at a time, whenever convenient take a whole handful of words and twist them so that men will not find out for centuries what it all means."

One of the most interesting uses to which Dr. Melton puts his discovery is to test the authenticity of a number of doubtful and spurious poems attributed to Donne. He includes, for example, in the canon of Donne's verse *Love's War*, *Borrowing*, and *Love's Wit*, but excludes *A Warning*, *Believe Your Glass*, *The Lie*, *To My Lord Pembroke*, *On a Flea in His Mistress's Bosom*, and *Dr. Donne's Farewell to the World*. In numerous passages, also, he is enabled by his "rule" to supply a missing, or to recognize a superfluous word, to select the correct variant, and to scan such puzzling lines as those *To Sir Edward Herbert* :

"Thus man, that might be His pleasure is His
And is His devil that might be his God."

Applying the touchstone to the couplet which Mr. Gosse cites as lines that "may excusably defy a novice"—

"And as fiddlers stop lowest, at highest sound,

So to the most brave, stoops he nighest the ground,"—

he emends the reading so far as to supply one missing word and eliminates two which have been added mistakenly with a view to smoother scan-

sion, and thus arrives at a much more satisfactory reading :

"As fiddlers stoop the lowest at highest sound,
To the most brave, stoops he nighest the ground."

Dr. Melton's work will also, no doubt, open the way to a thorough investigation of the sources of Donne's metrical peculiarities, and to the determination of the relative authenticity of the Donne manuscripts still extant, and thus lead to a definitive edition of his works.

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FRENCH LITERATURE.

MAURICE SOURIAU : *Moralistes et poètes*. Paris : Vuibert et Nony, 1907.

A few years ago the French Academy crowned an important work on Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, which greatly modifies the accepted opinion concerning that author. The book entitled: *Bernardin de Saint-Pierre d'après ses Manuscrits* was published by M. Souriau, after several years of careful study of the manuscripts preserved at the Municipal Library of Le Havre. Previous to this M. Souriau published among other works an edition of the *Préface de Cromwell*, which was also crowned by the Academy; two important works on French Versification, namely, *La Versification de Molière* and *L'Évolution du Vers Français*; and a volume on *Pascal* in the *Collection des Classiques Populaires*.

Recently M. Souriau, who is an indefatigable worker and a frequent contributor to several French literary reviews, has collected some of his more important articles and published them in a volume of some three hundred pages under the title: *Moralistes et Poètes*.

The range of subjects, all dealing with French literature, indicates the variety of M. Souriau's interests in his special field. He proposes a new interpretation of the *Pensées* of Pascal; discusses Lamartine's versification; rehabilitates in a way Casimir Delavigne; treats René Bazin as writer of the "Roman Social"; and finally outlines the

poetic movement in Normandy to-day. The articles are of varying interest and importance, but not one is negligible—far from it. Of the shorter ones not already mentioned may be noted *Les Cahiers d'écolier de Brizeux* giving the results of an examination of that poet's note-books, which by good fortune came into M. Souriau's hands. As Brizeux himself says, "l'enfant renferme le vieillard," and these books disclose the beginnings of the poet's love for Ovid and particularly for Virgil, whose melancholy tenderness lives again in him and makes him rank "bon second après Chenier dans le genre de l'idylle." Incidentally we get a glimpse of school life in France in the first decade of the nineteenth century. Not less interesting is the very slight glimpse of school girl life which we get in the short article on Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's favorite daughter, Virginie, whose "silhouette de jeune fille, grâce aux manuscrits de la bibliothèque du Havre, se révèle à nous comme un pastel un peu pâli par le temps."

Le Romantisme jugé par Alfred de Vigny is a study of the remains of the poet's correspondence with the Crown Prince of Bavaria, afterwards Maximilian II.¹ This correspondence was never edited. M. Souriau supposed that something of it might still be found in the Secret Archives of the Royal Family at Munich. A search there brought to light several interesting fragments.² The Prince's first letter contains an appreciation of *Cinq Mars* and *Stello*, both of which deeply impressed the young man. De Vigny's reply has been characterised by Faguet as "une leçon sur toute la littérature française de 1800 à 1839." It is interesting to note, in this connection, that at this time, and perhaps on account of this correspondence, de Vigny thought of writing a treatise on "l'homme d'état."

In his letter de Vigny mentions Lamartine's "trop facile improvisation." Lamartine himself rejoiced so to speak in the title "amateur."³ Already in the *lettre-préface* to the *Recueils Poétiques* (Dec. 1, 1838) he discloses his methods

¹ *Journal d'un Poète*, 7 déc., 1837. M. Souriau prints the Prince's letter. For De Vigny's reply vd. *Correspondance*, p. 83 (Calmann-Lévy).

² All published by M. Souriau in *La Revue de Paris*, 1er mai, 1898.

³ *Préface des Méditations*, 1849.